biasing wordlines to unselected cells in the column at a voltage substantially equal to 4.5V and a wordline to the selected cell at a voltage substantially equal to 0V.

REMARKS

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3-5, 10 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Noguchi et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,819,592). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Noguchi et al. discloses a semiconductor memory that includes a memory cell unit with select gate lines SSL and GSL that control select gate transistors S1 and S2 respectively, as shown in Figure 8. Figure 8 also shows transistor M0 is nearest to S1 and transistor M15 is closest to S2. Figure 7 shows a timing diagram where SSL is brought high prior to GSL going high. The Examiner states that this is the equivalent of Applicant's claimed method for reading/verifying a NAND flash memory array. However, column 14, lines 52 – 63 of *Noguchi et al.* indicates that this cannot be true.

Applicant's invention, as claimed in the present claim 1, biases the select gate drain and source lines in an order determined by the position of the selected cell in the column. For example, if a transistor closest to the select gate source line is to be selected, the select gate source line is biased first before the select gate drain line. The passage in *Noguchi et al.* at col. 14, lines 52 – 63 states that the timing diagram of Figure 7 shows the timing for both the M0 transistor being selected as well as the M15 transistor being selected. This makes it clear that the order of biasing the SSL and GSL lines of *Noguchi et al.* is the same no matter which transistor is being selected. *Noguchi et al.*, therefore, neither teaches nor suggests Applicant's invention as claimed in claim 1.

Applicant's claim 10 claims a method in which the select gate drain and source lines are biased in an order determined by a predetermined range of memory cells at the top of a column. Since *Noguchi et al.* neither teaches nor suggests biasing the SSL and GSL lines in different orders, the limitations of this claim are also neither taught nor suggested by *Noguchi et al.*

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 2 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has added new claim 21 that includes the allowable subject matter of claim 2 with the subject matter of claim 1. Claim 2 has been canceled without prejudice to avoid duplication.

Claims 6-9 and 12-20 were allowed.

CONCLUSION

If the Examiner has any questions or concerns regarding this application, please contact the undersigned at (612) 312-2211.

Respectfully submitted,

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